



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/722,637	11/26/2003	Andrew P. Verrall	306S8/064A	7316
4743	7590	04/01/2005	EXAMINER	
MARSHALL, GERSTEIN & BORUN LLP 6300 SEARS TOWER 233 S. WACKER DRIVE CHICAGO, IL 60606			RAYFORD, SANDRA M	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1772	

DATE MAILED: 04/01/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/722,637	VERRALL ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Sandra M. Nolan	1772

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-33 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-33 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 2-18 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ . |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>2-11 and 10-12-04</u> . | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>See Continuation Sheet</u> . |

Continuation of Attachment(s) 6). Other: Pg. 2 of Notice of Allowance for 10/367,050.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312.
2. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.
3. Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Michael Muczynski (312/474-6300) on 10 August 2004.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the Claims

In line 1 of claims 19-29, and 31-65, "(withdrawn)" has been changed to
-- (original) --.

Remarks

The captioning of certain claims was changed pursuant to rejoinder (see below).

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

- 4. Claims 30-65 have been rejoined. Claims 1-65 have been allowed.
5. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:
5. The base claims of the application are summarized as follows:

Claim 1 covers a water soluble film comprising:

- 30 to 95% of a hydrolyzed copolymer of vinyl acetate and methyl acrylate,
- 8 to 30% of modified starch
- 5 to 30% plasticizer
- 0.0 to 1.5% lubricant/release agent
- 0.01 to 1.5 % surfactant.

DETAILED ACTION

Claims

1. Claims 1-33 are pending.

Priority

2. It is noted that this application appears to claim subject matter disclosed in prior Application No. 10/367,050, filed 14 February 2003. A reference to the prior application must be inserted as the first sentence(s) of the specification of this application or in an application data sheet (37 CFR 1.76), if applicant intends to rely on the filing date of the prior application under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) or 120. See 37 CFR 1.78(a). For benefit claims under 35 U.S.C. 120, the reference must include the relationship (i.e., continuation, divisional, or continuation-in-part) of all nonprovisional applications. Also, the current status of all nonprovisional parent applications referenced should be included.

Claim Objection

3. Claims 2-18 are objected to because of the following informalities: they are composition claims dependent upon a claim directed to a film (i.e., claim 1). Appropriate correction is required.

Double Patenting

4. A rejection based on double patenting of the "same invention" type finds its support in the language of 35 U.S.C. 101 which states that "whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process ... may obtain a patent therefor ..." (Emphasis added). Thus, the term "same invention," in this context, means an invention drawn to identical subject matter. See *Miller v. Eagle Mfg. Co.*, 151 U.S. 186 (1894); *In re Ockert*, 245 F.2d 467, 114 USPQ 330 (CCPA 1957); and *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970).

A statutory type (35 U.S.C. 101) double patenting rejection can be overcome by canceling or amending the conflicting claims so they are no longer coextensive in scope. The filing of a terminal disclaimer cannot overcome a double patenting rejection based upon 35 U.S.C. 101.

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

5. This rejection is proper because the restriction requirement made in the I050 application was withdrawn when all of the then-pending claims were rejoined. See section 4 on page 2 of the Notice of Allowance letter dated 16 August 2004 (copy enclosed). See MPEP 804.01(E).

6. Claims 1-33 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-65 of U.S. Patent No. 6,821,590 (to Verrall et al; issued from US. SN. 10/367,050). The '590 patent and this application share at least one inventor.

Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the ranges for the amounts of modified starch used in the instant claims overlap those recited in the claims of the '590 patent and are obvious thereover.

The '590 claims recite amounts of modified starch of 8.0 to 25.0 wt% (claims 1 and 2) and 5 to 30 wt% (claim 12) or 10 wt% (claims 7, 14, 32 and 50). The claims of this application recite 4 to 30 wt% (claim 1), 4 to 12 wt% (claims 20, 28), and 4 to 25 wt% (claims 23 and 33) of the same ingredient, respectively. Otherwise, the claims of the '590 patent and those of this application are substantially the same.

In the absence of convincing objective evidence to the contrary, the selection of suitable amounts of modified starch to be used in the methods, films, packages, and unit doses claimed in the '590 patent would be a matter of engineering choice depending upon the properties desired in the resultant methods/articles.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication should be addressed to Sandra M. Nolan-Rayford, at telephone number 571/272-1495. She can be reached Monday through Thursday, from 6:30 am to 4:00 pm, ET.

If attempts to reach the examiner are unsuccessful, contact her supervisor, Harold Pyon, at 571/272-1498.

The fax number for patent application documents is 703/872-9306.

S. M. Nolan - Rayford
S. M. Nolan-Rayford
Primary Examiner
Technology Center 1700

10722637(20050330)